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Discounted train rides between Boston, Maine for Iraq, Afghanistan vets

Posted by Matt Rocheleau July 25, 2013 02:51 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

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Discounted train tickets between Boston and Maine will be given for patients and families traveling to a Boston-based medical program that treats Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress or traumatic brain injury.

One veteran and one companion traveling to the Home Base Program at Massachusetts General Hospital can travel between any two stations on the Amtrak Downeaster for \$10 one-way or \$20 round-trip per person from Monday through Friday, officials from the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority announced Thursday.

Reservations must be made three days in advance, the announcement said.

Regular fares on the Amtrak Downeaster vary depending on when and where a passenger is traveling, according to the [train route's website](#). Prices on one-way trips range from \$6 to \$29 per person.

The line runs between Brunswick and North Station in Boston. There are a total of 12 stations along the line – six in Maine, three in New Hampshire and three

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in Massachusetts.

“We are deeply grateful to NNEPRA and the residents of Maine for making such a generous commitment to help eliminate this transportation barrier and enable Maine veterans and families to recover from the invisible wounds of war,” said a statement from retired Brigadier General Jack Hammond, director of the Home Base Program.

The [program](#), founded in the fall of 2009 by Massachusetts General Hospital and the Red Sox Foundation, provides clinical care for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans and families experiencing post-traumatic stress, deployment stress, and traumatic brain injury. The program also offers clinical education and works on research to improve treatment for those conditions.

The new reduced fares, called the Downeaster Home Base Discount, are provided through a partnership between the program, Amtrak Downeaster, the Red Sox Foundation and the Wounded Heroes Program of Maine.

“Taking the financial burden off our service members for traveling to Home Base makes it that much easier to plug them into quality care for brain injuries as well as psychological injuries,” said a statement from Pam Payeur, director of the program in Maine. “Collaborating with the Home Base team allows us to bring our wounded consistent, comprehensive care. This makes it possible to help them get their lives on track and reduce the impact of these types of injuries.”

“We are proud to partner with the Home Base Program at Mass General Hospital and the Amtrak Downeaster to provide our wounded Maine veterans with the best care available for traumatic brain injury, or TBI, and post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD,” she said.

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